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**Interagency Human Trafficking Task Force
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 13, 2012**

Convened at 10:00am

Members present: Martha Coakley, Lisa Goldblatt Grace, Deputy Superintendent Kelly Nee, Audrey Porter, Cherie Jimenez, Julie Dahlstrom, Casey Atkins, Amy Farrell, Geline W. Williams, Chief Tom Pasquarello, Heather Rowe, Sergeant Pi Heseltine, Susan Goldfarb, Stephanie Decandia, Katia Santiago-Taylor

Staff Present: Liam Lowney, Stephen Stuart

Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Motion for approval of 4/26/12 HTTF Draft Minutes, Pasquarello Second
- Minutes adopted unanimously and will be posted on the AGO website

Update from Victim Services Subcommittee – Julie Dahlstrom, Audrey Porter, and Cherie Jimenez

- Two main tenets of research over the past weeks
 - What is needed to improve trafficking prevention using concrete ideas?
 - How can we improve cooperation with law enforcement agencies and victim service partners?
 - Victim/Witness services cannot provide all of the services in order to ensure successful transition for victims; cooperation and an active law enforcement role is crucial
- Understanding the needs of victims
 - Sex trafficking victims often have limited work experience to assist transition
 - Lack of honest, open dialogue with other victims reduces perception of success and hope for victims
 - Open conversations and support groups involving other victims provide an opportunity for victims to see and interact with people who have been successful in their efforts
 - Group discussions will alleviate the stigma that a victim may feel after he or she has been identified
 - Needs of victim can be better assessed
 - Challenges faced in identifying victims
 - Victims often perceive themselves as independent, rather than controlled or forced into work
 - Preconceived notions on victimization create difficulties in self-identification
 - Impossible to identify everyone or provide resources for all victims
- Honest dialogue is key to identifying challenges
 - Provides hope and opportunity to experience another victim's successful exit plan

- Key is getting information from someone who has been through the same situation, rather than a only a service provider
 - Providers lack the personal experience can present challenges to helping victims open up about their problems
 - This has been successfully implemented in drug rehabilitation programs
 - Familiarity and understanding of situation improve success
- Important to recognize that providers can only support someone's recovery, not save them
- Important to understand that every case and victim is a different situation
 - There is no specific cookie-cutter solution to each and every problem
- Diversity of services and support will help with the diversity of each case
- Immediate needs for adults
 - Financial support for recovery
 - Retraining for skills and employment
 - Three main categories of support
 - Structural needs (money, safety, shelter)
 - Relational factors (social support, substitute system for the system they have in place as a victim)
 - Individual factors (ability to see change, road to recovery, coping with stresses, resilience)
 - Need to find way to let societal factors stop playing role (felony convictions, CORI checks, etc.)
 - The needs are so much more than structural in most situations
- Immediate needs for children
 - Getting social services and family agencies involved in these trafficking cases
- Undocumented victims
 - Road to legal status in US takes a long time, often longer than a case or support system can help a victim
 - Important to identify at the beginning of case; preventing fear of deportation and easing road to employment/structural support is crucial
- Challenges facing these improvements
 - Lack of funds, resources
 - Lack of frontline staff: caseloads are often too heavy for each worker
 - Goals are nearly impossible to reach due to this shortage
 - Law may be in place, but putting legislation into action can be overwhelming
- Concluding Recommendations
 - Importance of survivor-led programs
 - Flexibility of programs / ability to adapt to each separate situation
 - Need to meet victims on frontline
 - More holistic and integrated approach from all three perspectives (police, courts, advocacy/social groups)
 - Need to create universal language in these situations
- Task Force feedback
 - AG Coakley
 - Agree on need for concrete experience and strategies, congruent identification of victim needs

- Developing protocols is important
- Need to expedite creation of these services
- Liam Lowney
 - Survivor led programs are common in other victim fields like homicide bereavement.
 - Need to figure out how to translate these successes into the HT field

Postponement of Demand Presentation

- Co-Chairs unavailable to this meeting so the presentation will be moved to January.

Research on Demand Reduction Strategies – Michael Shively, Ph. D. Abt Associates

- Prostitution and sex trafficking markets divided into three components: Supply, Demand, Distribution
 - Supply: New victims
 - Demand: Johns
 - Distribution: Pimps and traffickers
 - Victims identified as “supply” simply to better understand market reduction strategies; does not wish to identify victims as commodities or less-than-human
- The differences between prostitution and human trafficking are **not** important in demand reduction strategies – should not waste time or resources relevant to demand reduction in an effort to define such differences, as the strategies for reducing demand will have the same effect
- Demand is the foundation of the problem, rather than supply or distribution
 - If there is no demand for prostitution, there is no market
- Dr. Shively discussed research relating to various strategies to combat Demand.
 - 855 cities and counties have done reverse stings in an effort to reduce demand
 - There are over 40 John Schools in the United States
 - Sanctions include shaming, community service, general Criminal Justice sanctions
 - Demand specific sanctions have included John Schools, direct and indirect education
 - 1/3 of prostitution and solicitation starts on the internet (Backpage, Craigslist)
 - Over 20,000 municipalities in country – strategy has been sparse
- 35 MA municipalities have held reverse stings
 - Worcester was highlighted as being aggressive in their demand reduction efforts
 - Stings have mainly resulted in simple misdemeanors for offenders
- Overall prostitution/trafficking reduction operation results
 - Identifies the challenges of focussing efforts on supply and distribution
 - There will always be new sources of supply and distribution, and it’s nearly impossible to stop
 - Demand-oriented approaches have had better results in certain areas and situations
 - Jersey City – High-end demand reduction has been successful

- Wilkes-Barre – john school implemented, demand greatly reduced after some time
- Key points and strategies
 - Important for police and courts to recognize the felony reductions that occur as a result of prosecution of misdemeanor charges related to prostitution
 - Cultural change is important in reducing demand; major changes in culture have occurred within generations before, and significant education should be implemented to help pass this message on
 - Prosecutors and courts need to take these problems seriously, so that the work of police departments and investigators does not go to waste
 - Attacking the problem from the supply and distribution ends alone have not worked; there are always replacements for these sides of the market
 - Demand-heavy reduction strategies must be implemented in order to attack the foundation of the problem
 - Action must follow up law implementation; there have been situations where new legislation has been enacted to attack demand, but the plans are never actually put into use
 - www.demandforum.net can provide a multitude of resources devoted to demand-reduction strategies and programs
 - Fines and penalties can actually be profitable for towns and cities if they implement demand reduction strategies
- Dr.Shively addressed some brief follow up questions from the Task Force.

Information on upcoming meetings – AG Coakley

- Next large meeting is September 12th; subcommittees will be working on projects until then
- Scheduled to hear from Education and Training, Data Collection and Sharing Subcommittees

Any items not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of meeting? – AG Coakley

- None seen

Motion to adjourn-Williams, Pasquarello second

Adjourned at 12:00 PM